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FM AMEMBASSY JAKARTA
TO RUEHC/SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 1082
INFO RUEHZS/ASSOCIATION OF SOUTHEAST ASIAN NATIONS PRIORITY
RUEHBJ/AMEMBASSY BEIJING 5772
RUEHBY/AMEMBASSY CANBERRA 3455
RUEHWL/AMEMBASSY WELLINGTON 3373
RUEHUL/AMEMBASSY SEOUL 5274
RUEHKO/AMEMBASSY TOKYO 2895
RUEHNE/AMEMBASSY NEW DELHI 2548
RUEHKA/AMEMBASSY DHAKA 1526
RUEHLM/AMEMBASSY COLOMBO 1539
RUEHPB/AMEMBASSY PORT MORESBY 4144
RUEHBD/AMCONSUL PERTH 1373
RUEHHK/AMCONSUL HONG KONG 3202
RHHJJPI/USPACOM HONOLULU HI
RHEFDIA/DIA WASHINGTON DC
RUEAIIA/CIA WASHDC
RHEHNSC/NSC WASHDC

C O N F I D E N T I A L JAKARTA 002341

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SUBJECT: WEST JAVA -- ISLAMIST GROUP CONVICTED OF TREASON

REF: JAKARTA 979

Classified By: Pol/C Joseph L. Novak, reasons 1.4(b+d)

¶1. (C) SUMMARY: A court in West Java--a province adjacent to Jakarta--has found 17 members of a small extremist group guilty of treason. Although the group engaged in anti-government activities, it did not engage in violence or terrorism. Our contact in the governor's office in West Java told us that the group was intent on setting up a "state within a state." Islamists have a long history in the West Javan region, including a post-independence rebellion that lasted over a decade. END SUMMARY.

CONVICTIONS IN WEST JAVA

¶2. (U) A court in Bandung, West Java, convicted members of a small Islamist group of treason and anti-government activities on December 19. All told, the court found 17 members of the group guilty of "recruiting new members, supporting the disintegration of the state, and hostility towards the government." The group goes by the name "Indonesian Islamic State" (NII) and those convicted were sentenced to between two and five years in prison.

¶3. (U) The group's claims that they represented "true Islam" were thoroughly rejected by mainstream Muslim groups in Indonesia. Although the Ministry of Religious Affairs and the quasi-governmental Indonesian Council of Ulemas (MUI) ruled the movement as "deviant," the members were not convicted of blasphemy, however.

SETTING UP "A STATE WITHIN A STATE"

¶4. (C) During the trial, testimony revealed that NII actively recruited new members and extorted money to fund their operations. New members were allegedly obligated to make large monthly contributions to the group. At the time of the GOI crackdown on the group earlier this year (see reftel), police seized the group's "constitution" and financial records.

¶5. (C) The size and scope of the group's activities remain

unclear. NII seemed to focus on subversive politics and not violence--and there is no known link to terrorist activities or terrorist groups such as Jemmah Islamiyah. Our contact in the governor's office in West Java told us that the group was intent on setting up a "state within a state" and had been working in a number of villages to enlist support among the populace "to defy the central government."

ISLAMISTS: A LONG HISTORY IN WEST JAVA

¶6. (C) Islamists have a long history in West Java, including involvement in the failed Darul Islam rebellion of the 1950's-60's. This seminal rebellion was crucial to a wide spectrum of Islamic extremists in Indonesia, including to the founders of Jemmah Islamiyah. It is not clear whether the NII group has been completely rolled up, but it appears to have been small and not to have had much popular support.

HUME